

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

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FM AMZFBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4971

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 0179

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: RH, SF, PINT, UK, PFOR

SUBJ: TEXT OF SMITH'S STATEMENT

REF: CAPE TOWN 177 (NOTAL)

FOLLOWING IS RELEVANT PORTION OF STATEMENT MADE IN RHODESIAN
PARLIAMENT ON FEBRUARY 20 BY IAN SMITH:

"AS FAR AS THE SETTLEMENT ISSUED IS CONCERNED, THIS TOO
WILL NOT BE EASY TO ACHIEVE. BOTH SIDES HAVE TRIED HARD
AND TRIED SINCERELY BUT IT WOULD BE IDLE TO PRETEND THAT
ONLY A NARROW GAP DIVIDES US.

WE WILL GO ON TRYING, WITH PATIENCE AND WITH DETERMINATION

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TO SUCCEED. ALTHOUGH A SETTLEMENT IS ESSENTIALLY AN

INTERNAL MATTER, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT IF IT WERE ACHIEVED IT WOULD HAVE FAR-REACHING BENEFICIAL EFFECTS IN RELATION TO THE STABILITY OF THE WHOLE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

FOR THIS REASON AND IN THE LIGHT OF THE AFTERMATH OF THE COMMUNIST INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA THERE IS AN ADDED URGENCY, OF WHICH WE MUST ALL BE DEEPLY CONSCIOUS.

AFTER THE PEARCE DEBACLE IT WAS MUTUALLY AGREED BETWEEN OURSELVES AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT THAT WE SHOULD CHANGE OUR TACTICS. ALL PREVIOUS NEGOTIATIONS HAD BEEN ON A GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT BASIS. IT WAS NOW AGREED THAT WE SHOULD TRY TO REACH AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT BY DIRECT NEGOTIATION BETWEEN THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT AND AFRICAN LEADERS WITHIN RHODESIA.

I HAVE ON PREVIOUS OCCASIONS REPORTED FULLY ON OUR ENDEAVOURS TO ACHIEVE THIS INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. AFTER THE REJECTION IN JUNE 1974 OF THE AGREEMENT I HAD REACHED WITH BISHOP MUZOREWA, THE ANC TRIED TO PERSUADE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO CALL A CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE IN LONDON AND THEY KEPT UP THIS PRESSURE UNTIL ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF LAST YEAR.

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT DEWINED TO DO SO, NO DOUBT BECAUSE THEY JUDGED, QUITE CORRECTLY, THAT I WOULD NOT ATTEND SUCH A CONFERENCE. I DID NOT, AND I STILL DO NOT BELIEVE THAT A CONFERENCE OF THAT KIND WOULD SUCCEED. I AM CONVINCED THAT THE BEST HOPE OF SUCCESS LIES IN CLOSE AND DETAILED DISCUSSION BETWEEN A SMALL NUMBER OF PARICIPALS FROM EACH SIDE, AND I WAS THEREFORE HAPPY TO FALL IN WITH THE SUGGESTION TO THIS EFFECT WHICH MR. NKOMO MADE AT OUR LAST MEETING.

HOWEVER, AS I HAVE SAID, THERE IS A GREATER URGENCY TODAY BECAUSE OF THE CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND I HAVE HAD A NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIONS FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE FREE WORLD IN SUPPORT OF THIS CONTENTION.

ALTHOUGH THE IMMEDIATE RUSSIAN OBJECTIVE LIES IN SOUTHERN
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AFRICA, THIS IS BUT ONE STEP TOWARDS THEIR AIM OF DEPRIVING THE FREE WORLD OF THEIR STRATEGIC MINERAL REQUIREMENTS WHICH THEY OBTAIN FROM THESE AREAS, AND AT THE SAME TIME GIVING THE COMMUNIST CONTROL OF THE VITAL CAPE SEA ROUTE.

THE MOST RECENT DEVELOPMENT ON THE SETTLEMENT ISSUE IS A COMMUNICATION WHICH I HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY. I HAVE TODAY SENT MY REPLY TO HIM.

CLEARLY, BECAUSE OF THE RUSSIAN ATTEMPT TO ELIMINATE THE INFLUENCE OF THE FREE WORLD FROM THE SOUTHERN PORTION OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT, A NEW SITUATION PRESENTS ITSELF.

ACCORDINGLY, ONCE AGAIN, I BELIEVE WE HAD REACHED A STAGE IN OUR HISTORY WHERE IT COULD BE BENEFICIAL TO CHANGE OUR TACTICS.

IF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO MAKE A CONSTRUCTIVE AND REALISTIC EFFORT TO ASSIST IN OUR SETTLEMENT, THEN I BELIEVE WE MUST GIVE THIS SERIOUS CONSIDERATION.

NO DOUBT MANY RHODSIANS ARE CONCERNED AT THE IRRESPONSIBLE UTTERANCES ABOUT RHODESIA WHICH HAVE RECENTLY EMANATED FROM CERTAIN QUARTERS OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. I SHARE THIS CONCERN.

HOWEVER, I KNOW FROM EXPERIENCE THAT SOME POLITICIANS HAVE THE HABIT OF MAKING SPEECHES IN ORDER TO IMPRESS PARTICULAR AUDIENCES. ACCORDINGLY THESE CHANGE TO FIT IN WITH THE VARYING CIRCUMSTANCES. IN TIME WE WILL FIND OUT WHAT THE TRUE ATTITUDE OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS TOWARDS RHODESIA.

IT MAY WELL BE THAT IN THIS NEW EFFORT, AS HAS HAPPENED IN THE PAST, WE SHALL NOT SUCCEED IN REACHING OUR GOAL OF A SETTLEMENT. I INDICATED EARLIER THE KIND OF SETTLEMENT WE ARE SEEKING. THE TASK IS A FORMIDABLE ONE. NEVERTHELESS, I AM CONVINCED THAT IT IS OUR DUTY TO TRY - TO TRY HONESTLY AND SINCERELY AND TO THE VERY BEST OF OUR ABILITY."

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